



STATE BAR COURT OF CALIFORNIA

STATE BAR COURT CLERK'S OFFICE SAN FRANCISCO

HEARING DEPARTMENT – SAN FRANCISCO

) Case No.: 12-C-16293-LMA
)
)
) DECISION AND DISCIPLINE ORDER;
) ORDER SEALING CERTAIN
) DOCUMENTS
DOCUMENTS
)
)

Introduction¹

In this disciplinary proceeding, respondent John Joseph VanDervoort² was accepted for participation in the State Bar Court's Alternative Discipline Program (ADP). As Respondent has successfully completed the ADP, the court hereby orders, as set forth below, the imposition of discipline relating to a successful completion of the ADP.

Pertinent Procedural History

On January 17, 2013, Respondent pled guilty to and was convicted of disturbing the peace – public fighting (California Penal Code section 415(1)).

On April 17, 2013, the Office of the Chief Trial Counsel of the State Bar of California (State Bar) transmitted a certified copy of the aforementioned conviction to the State Bar Court pursuant to sections 6101-6102 and California Rules of Court, rule 9.5, et seq.

¹ Unless otherwise indicated, all references to rules refer to the State Bar Rules of Professional Conduct. Furthermore, all statutory references are to the Business and Professions Code, unless otherwise indicated.

² Respondent was admitted to the practice of law in this state on December 13, 1972, and has been a member of the State Bar of California since that time.

On May 13, 2013, the Review Department of the State Bar Court issued an order referring Respondent's conviction to the Hearing Department for a hearing and decision recommending the discipline to be imposed in the event that the facts and circumstances surrounding Respondent's conviction are found to involve moral turpitude or other misconduct warranting discipline.

In or about April 2013, Respondent contacted the State Bar's Lawyer Assistance Program (LAP) to assist him with his mental health and substance abuse issues. On April 12, 2013, Respondent signed a LAP Participation Plan.

Respondent sought to participate in the State Bar Court's ADP. This matter was referred to the ADP on August 6, 2013.

On August 9, 2013, Respondent submitted a declaration to the court, establishing a nexus between his mental health and substance abuse issues and the charges in this matter.

The parties entered into a Stipulation Re Facts and Conclusions of Law (Stipulation) on October 15, 2013. The Stipulation set forth the factual findings, legal conclusions, and mitigating and aggravating circumstances. The Stipulation was received by the court on October 15, 2013.

Following briefing by the parties, the court issued a Confidential Statement of Alternative Dispositions and Orders dated December 9, 2013, formally advising the parties of: (1) the discipline which would be ordered if Respondent successfully completed the ADP; and (2) the discipline which would be recommended if Respondent failed to successfully complete or was terminated from the ADP. After agreeing to those alternative dispositions, Respondent executed the Contract and Waiver for Participation in the State Bar Court's ADP, the court accepted Respondent for participation in the ADP, and Respondent's period of participation in the ADP began on December 9, 2013.

On April 4, 2016, after receiving a certificate of Respondent's successful completion of the LAP, the court issued an order finding that Respondent successfully completed the ADP.

Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law

The parties' Stipulation, including the court's order approving the Stipulation, is attached and hereby incorporated by reference, as if fully set forth herein.

Respondent stipulated that although the facts and circumstances surrounding his misdemeanor criminal conviction did not involve moral turpitude, they did involve other misconduct warranting discipline.

In aggravation, Respondent had a prior record of discipline³ and caused significant harm to his spouse and her young son. In mitigation, Respondent demonstrated remorse and cooperated with the State Bar by entering into a pretrial stipulation. In addition, it is appropriate to consider Respondent's successful completion of the ADP as a further mitigating circumstance in this matter.

Discussion

The purpose of State Bar disciplinary proceedings is not to punish the attorney, but rather to protect the public, the courts, and the legal profession; to maintain the highest possible professional standards for attorneys; and to preserve confidence in the legal profession.

(Chadwick v. State Bar (1989) 49 Cal.3d 103, 111.)

In determining the appropriate alternative discipline recommendations if Respondent successfully completed the ADP and if he did not successfully complete the ADP, the court considered the parties' briefs on discipline as well as certain standards and case law. In

³ Respondent's prior record of discipline consisted of a public reproval that became effective on January 22, 1992.

particular, the court considered Former Standards⁴ 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8(a), and 2.12(b), and *In the Matter of Ozowski* (Review Dept. 2007) 5 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 67; *In the Matter of Hickey* (1990) 50 Cal.3d 571; and *In the Matter of Jackson* (Review Dept. 2003) 4 Cal. State Bar Ct. Rptr. 610.

Because Respondent has now successfully completed the ADP, this court, in turn, now orders the imposition of the lower level of discipline, set forth more fully below, contained in the Confidential Statement of Alternative Dispositions and Orders.

Discipline Order

Accordingly, it is ordered that respondent **John Joseph VanDervoort**, State Bar no. 54720, is hereby publicly reproved. Pursuant to the provisions of rule 5.127(A) of the Rules of Procedure of the State Bar of California (Rules of Procedure), the public reproval will be effective when this decision becomes final. Furthermore, pursuant to rule 9.19(a) of the California Rules of Court and rule 5.128 of the Rules of Procedure, the court finds that the interests of Respondent and the protection of the public will be served by the following specified conditions being attached to the public reproval imposed in this matter. Failure to comply with any conditions attached to this public reproval may constitute cause for a separate proceeding for willful breach of rule 1-110 of the Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of California. Respondent is hereby ordered to comply with the following conditions attached to his public reproval for a period of two years following the effective date of the public reproval imposed in this matter:

1. During the reproval period, Respondent must comply with the provisions of the State Bar Act and Rules of Professional Conduct;

⁴ Effective July 1, 2015, the standards were amended. As the Confidential Statement was prepared prior to the amending of the standards, this court relied on and applied the standards that were in effect at the time the Confidential Statement was signed.

- 2. Within 10 days of any change, Respondent must report to the Membership Records Office of the State Bar and to the Office of Probation of the State Bar of California (Office of Probation), all changes of information, including current office address and telephone number, or other address for State Bar purposes, as prescribed by section 6002.1 of the Business and Professions Code;
- 3. Within 30 days after the effective date of discipline, Respondent must contact the Office of Probation and schedule a meeting with Respondent's assigned probation deputy to discuss these terms and conditions attached to his public reproval. Upon the direction of the Office of Probation, Respondent must meet with the probation deputy either in person or by telephone. During the reproval period, Respondent must promptly meet with the probation deputy as directed and upon request;
- 4. Respondent must submit written quarterly reports to the Office of Probation on each January 10, April 10, July 10 and October 10 of the period of reproval. Under penalty of perjury, Respondent must state whether Respondent has complied with the State Bar Act, the Rules of Professional Conduct, and all reproval conditions during the preceding calendar quarter. Respondent must also state whether there are any proceedings pending against him in the State Bar Court and if so, the case number and current status of that proceeding. If the first report would cover less than 30 days, that report must be submitted on the next quarter date, and cover the extended period.

In addition to all quarterly reports, a final report, containing the same information, is due no earlier than 20 days before the last day of the reproval period and no later than the last day of the reproval period;

- 5. Subject to the assertion of applicable privileges, Respondent must answer fully, promptly and truthfully, any inquiries of the Office of Probation which are directed to Respondent personally or in writing relating to whether Respondent is complying or has complied with the reproval conditions;
- 6. Within one year of the effective date of the discipline herein, Respondent must provide to the Office of Probation satisfactory proof of attendance at a session of the State Bar Ethics School, and passage of the test given at the end of that session; and
- 7. The period during which these conditions are in effect will commence upon the date this decision imposing the public reproval becomes final.

Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination

It is also ordered that Respondent take and pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE) within one year after the effective date of the discipline herein and provide satisfactory proof of such passage to the State Bar's Office of Probation in Los Angeles within the same period.

<u>Costs</u>

The court orders that costs be awarded to the State Bar in accordance with Business and Professions Code section 6086.10 and are enforceable both as provided in Business and Professions Code section 6140.7 and as a money judgment.

Direction Re Decision and Order Sealing Certain Documents

The court directs a court case administrator to file this Decision and Discipline Order;

Order Sealing Certain Documents. Thereafter, pursuant to rule 5.388 of the Rules of Procedure,
all other documents not previously filed in this matter are ordered sealed pursuant to rule 5.12 of
the Rules of Procedure.

It is further ordered that protected and sealed material will only be disclosed to:

(1) parties to the proceeding and counsel; (2) personnel of the Supreme Court, the State Bar

Court and independent audiotape transcribers; and (3) personnel of the Office of Probation when necessary for their duties. Protected material will be marked and maintained by all authorized individuals in a manner calculated to prevent improper disclosure. All persons to whom protected material is disclosed will be given a copy of this order sealing the documents by the person making the disclosure.

IT IS SO ORDERED.

Dated: June 14, 2016

LUCY ARMENDARIZ
Judge of the State Bar Court

State Bar Court of California Hearing Department SAN FRANCISCO **ALTERNATIVE DISCIPLINE PROGRAM** Counsel For The State Bar 12-C-16293-PEM For Court use only **PUBLIC MATTER** Tammy M. Albertsen **Deputy Trial Counsel** 180 Howard Street San Francisco, CA 94105 (415) 538-2527 Bar # 154248 DEC - 9 2013 Counsel for Respondent STATE BAR COURT CLERK'S OFFICE Vicki H. Young SAN FRANCISCO 240 Stockton Street, #400 San Francisco, CA 94108 (415) 421-4347 Submitted to: SETTLEMENT JUDGE Bar # 73261 STIPULATION RE FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW in the Matter of: JOHN JOSEPH VANDERVOORT ALTERNATIVE DISCIPLINE PROGRAM

Note: All information required by this form and any additional information which cannot be provided in the space provided, must be set forth in an attachment to this stipulation under specific headings, e.g., "Facts," "Dismissals," "Conclusions of Law," "Supporting Authority" etc.

☐ PREVIOUS STIPUL

A. Parties' Acknowledgments:

A Member of the State Bar of California

Bar # 54720

(Respondent)

- Respondent is a member of the State Bar of California, admitted December 13, 1972. (1)
- The parties agree to be bound by the factual stipulations contained herein even if conclusions of law or (2) disposition (to be attached separately) are rejected or changed by the Supreme Court. However, except as otherwise provided in rule 5.386(D)(2) of the Rules of Procedure, if Respondent is not accepted into the Alternative Discipline Program, this stipulation will be rejected and will not be binding on the Respondent or the State Bar.
- All investigations or proceedings listed by case number in the caption of this stipulation are entirely resolved by this stipulation and are deemed consolidated, except for Probation Revocation proceedings. Dismissed charge(s)/count(s) are listed under "Dismissals." The stipulation consists of 8 pages, excluding the order.
- A statement of acts or omissions acknowledged by Respondent as cause or causes for discipline is included under "Facts."

•						
<u>(Do</u>	not wri	te abov	re this line.)			
(5)		Conclusions of law, drawn from and specifically referring to the facts are also included under "Conclusions of .aw".				
(6)	No per	No more than 30 days prior to the filing of this stipulation, Respondent has been advised in writing of any pending investigation/proceeding not resolved by this stipulation, except for criminal investigations.				
(7)	Pa; 614	Payment of Disciplinary Costs—Respondent acknowledges the provisions of Bus. & Prof. Code §§6086.10 & 6140.7 and will pay timely any disciplinary costs imposed in this proceeding.				
B. Aggravating Circumstances [for definition, see Standards for Attorney Sanctions for Professional Misconduct, standard 1.2(b)]. Facts supporting aggravating circumstances are required.						
(1)	\boxtimes	Prio	r record of discipline [see standard 1.2(f)]			
	(a)	\boxtimes	State Bar Court case # of prior case: 90-O-15293 (See, Stipulation Attachment at page 5.)			
	(b)	\boxtimes	Date prior discipline effective January 22, 1992			
	(c)	\boxtimes	Rules of Professional Conduct/ State Bar Act violations: Business and Professions Code, section 6106			
	(d)	\boxtimes	Degree of prior discipline: Public reproval			
	(e)		If Respondent has two or more incidents of prior discipline, use space provided below:			
(2)		Dishonesty: Respondent's misconduct was surrounded by or followed by bad faith, dishonesty, concealment, overreaching or other violations of the State Bar Act or Rules of Professional Conduct.				
(3)		Trust Violation: Trust funds or property were involved and Respondent refused or was unable to account to the client or person who was the object of the misconduct for improper conduct toward said funds or property.				
(4)	×	Harm: Respondent's misconduct harmed significantly a client, the public or the administration of justice. See Stipulation Attachment, page 8.				
(5)		Indifference: Respondent demonstrated indifference toward rectification of or atonement for the consequences of his or her misconduct.				
(6)		Lack of Cooperation: Respondent displayed a lack of candor and cooperation to victims of his/her misconduct or to the State Bar during disciplinary investigation or proceedings.				
(7)		Multiple/Pattern of Misconduct: Respondent's current misconduct evidences multiple acts of wrongdoin or demonstrates a pattern of misconduct.				

(Effective January 1, 2011)

☐ No aggravating circumstances are involved.

Additional aggravating circumstances:

(8)

c. Mitigating Circumstances [see standard 1.2(e)]. Facts supporting mitigating circumstances are required.						
(1)		No Prior Discipline: Respondent has no prior record of discipline over many years of practice coupled with present misconduct which is not deemed serious.				
(2)		No Harm: Respondent did not harm the client or person who was the object of the misconduct.				
(3)		Candor/Cooperation: Respondent displayed spontaneous candor and cooperation with the victims of his/her misconduct and to the State Bar during disciplinary investigation and proceedings.				
(4)		Remorse: Respondent promptly took objective steps spontaneously demonstrating remorse and recognition of the wrongdoing, which steps were designed to timely atone for any consequences of his/he misconduct.				
(5)		Restitution: Respondent paid \$ on in restitution to without the threat or force of disciplinary, civil or criminal proceedings.				
(6)		Delay: These disciplinary proceedings were excessively delayed. The delay is not attributable to Respondent and the delay prejudiced him/her.				
(7)		Good Faith: Respondent acted in good faith.				
(8)		Emotional/Physical Difficulties: At the time of the stipulated act or acts of professional misconduct Respondent suffered extreme emotional difficulties or physical disabilities which expert testimony would establish was directly responsible for the misconduct. The difficulties or disabilities were not the product of any illegal conduct by the member, such as illegal drug or substance abuse, and Respondent no longer suffers from such difficulties or disabilities.				
(9)		Severe Financial Stress: At the time of the misconduct, Respondent suffered from severe financial stress which resulted from circumstances not reasonably foreseeable or which were beyond his/her control and which were directly responsible for the misconduct.				
(10)		Family Problems: At the time of the misconduct, Respondent suffered extreme difficulties in his/her personal life which were other than emotional or physical in nature.				
(11)		Good Character: Respondent's good character is attested to by a wide range of references in the legal and general communities who are aware of the full extent of his/her misconduct.				
12)		Rehabilitation: Considerable time has passed since the acts of professional misconduct occurred followed by convincing proof of subsequent rehabilitation.				
13)		No mitigating circumstances are involved.				
Addi	tional	mitigating circumstances:				
	See, Stipulation Attachment, page 5.					
	1)	- · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·				

ATTACHMENT TO

STIPULATION RE FACTS, CONCLUSIONS OF LAW AND DISPOSITION

IN THE MATTER OF:

JOHN JOSEPH VANDERVOORT

CASE NUMBER:

12-C-16293

FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW.

Respondent admits that the following facts are true and that the facts and circumstances surrounding the offense for which he was convicted involved other misconduct warranting discipline.

Case No. 12-C-16293-PEM (Conviction Proceedings)

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND IN CONVICTION PROCEEDING:

- 1. This is a proceeding pursuant to sections 6101 and 6102 of the Business and Professions Code and rule 9.10 of the California Rules of Court.
- 2. On January 29, 2013, in Butte County Superior Court, case number CM037134, Respondent was charged as follows: Count 1 with a violation of Health and Safety Code section 11350(a), cocaine possession, a felony; Count 2 with a violation of Penal Code, section 243(e)(1), battery, a misdemeanor; and Count 3 with a violation of Penal Code, section 415(1), disturbing the peace, a misdemeanor.
- 3. On January 17, 2013, the court entered Respondent's plea of no contest to Count 3, a violation of Penal Code, section 415(1), a misdemeanor, and based thereon, the court accepted Respondent's plea and convicted Respondent. The remaining charges were dismissed.
- 4. On February 22, 2013, the court placed Respondent on formal probation for a period of 36 months. The court ordered that Respondent, among other things, submit to search of his person and property; refrain from use, control or possession of any controlled substance and alcohol; submit to substance testing; enroll in, pay for and successfully complete a 12-step program; enroll in and thereafter successfully complete an approved batterer's treatment program; not harass the victim; and pay a total of \$1361 in criminal and civil fines and fees.
- 5. Respondent did not appeal. The conviction was final when judgment was entered on February 22, 2013.
- 6. On May 13, 2013, the Review Department of the State Bar Court issued an order referring the matter to the Hearing Department for a hearing and decision recommending the discipline to be imposed in the event that the Hearing Department finds that the facts and circumstances surrounding the offense(s) for which Respondent was convicted involved moral turpitude or other misconduct warranting discipline.

FACTS:

7. On August 2, 2012, Respondent and his wife began arguing. After the wife's 11-year old boy overheard the argument, the boy found Respondent on top of his mother, pinning her to the couch. The

verbal and physical fighting continued in the presence of the 11-year old son. The son eventually intervened to pull Respondent off his mother. The victim then telephoned 9-1-1 and police responded. The report identifies injuries to the victim which were consistent with her account of the attack. The police who interviewed the boy found him to be very upset, recounting his step-father as a "drunk" and having been especially mean lately. Respondent did not speak to police, but instead handed the officer a paper with his attorney's name and phone number. The victim told police that Respondent had abused her numerous times over the years, but she had declined to press charges because Respondent dissuaded her by stating that he knew all the judges and that he would try to portray her as a bad mother. Respondent was arrested at the scene.

8. On January 17, 2013, Respondent entered a plea of no contest to Count 3, a violation of Penal Code, section 415(1) [disturbing the peace by fighting] with domestic violence probation conditions. The remaining charges were dismissed in view of Respondent's plea.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW:

The facts and circumstances surrounding the above-described violation did not involve moral turpitude but did involve other misconduct warranting discipline.

AGGRAVATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

Prior Record of Discipline (Std. 1.2(b)(i)): In 1992, Respondent was found culpable of violating a Fair Political Practices Act provision by attempting to hide his identity as a donor to a local campaign. Respondent asked his law firm employees to contribute money under their own names, however it was Respondent who gave them the money to contribute (plus a small extra sum to the employees to keep for their assistance). Respondent's conduct violated Government Code section 81002(a) [failing to disclose true source of campaign contributions]; Government Code section 84301 [prohibiting contributions in a name other than contributor's true name]; and Government Code section 84302 [prohibiting use of intermediaries or agents to make contributions]. The California Fair Political Practices Commission imposed a \$10,000 fine and the State Bar Court publicly reproved Respondent.

Harm (Std. 1.2(b)(iv)): Respondent's misconduct injured his spouse and traumatized her young son, resulting in physical and emotional harm. Furthermore, Respondent's misconduct induced criminal prosecution, thereby impacting the administration of justice and public confidence in attorneys.

MITIGATING CIRCUMSTANCES.

Remorse: On February 27, 2013, Respondent voluntarily signed a participation plan and entered into the State Bar's Lawyer's Assistance Program ("LAP") prior to initiation of State Bar Court proceedings, including prior to the Review Department's issuance of its order on conviction. Substance abuse and mental health conditions were found directly related to Respondent's misconduct. Respondent's taking objective steps to express remorse for and to atone for the consequences of his misconduct and to address the underlying causes of his misconduct by seeking assistance through LAP are entitled to credit in mitigation. (Segal v. State Bar (1988) 44 Cal.3d 1077, 1089 where mitigation credit was given when Respondent paid full restitution in installments, beginning before complainant contacted the State Bar.)

Pretrial Stipulation: Respondent actively pursued settlement and has entered into this stipulation prior to trial. (Silva-Vidor v. State Bar (1989) 49 Cal.3d 1071, 1079 [where mitigative credit was given for entering into a stipulation as to facts and culpability].)

COSTS OF DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS.

Respondent acknowledges that the Office of the Chief Trial Counsel has informed Respondent that as of August 5, 2013 (date on which settlement-in-principle was reached), the prosecution costs in this matter are \$2,392.00. Respondent further acknowledges that should this stipulation be rejected or should relief from the stipulation be granted, the costs in this matter may increase because of the cost of further proceedings.

EXCLUSION FROM MCLE CREDIT

Pursuant to rule 3201, Respondent may <u>not</u> receive MCLE credit for completion of State Bar Ethics School and/or any other educational course(s) to be ordered as a condition of reproval or suspension. (Rules Proc. of State Bar, rule 3201.)

In the Matter of:
JOHN JOSEPH VANDERVOORT

Case number(s):
12-C-16293-PEM

SIGNATURE OF THE PARTIES

By their signatures below, the parties and their counsel, as applicable, signify their agreement with each of the recitations and each of the terms and conditions of this Stipulation Re Facts and Conclusions of Law.

Respondent enters into this stipulation as a condition of his/her participation in the Program. Respondent understands that he/she must abide by all terms and conditions of Respondent's Program Contract.

If the Respondent is not accepted into the Program or does not sign the Program contract, this Stipulation will be rejected and will not be binding on Respondent or the State Bar.

If the Respondent is accepted into the Program, this Stipulation will be filed and will become public. Upon Respondent's successful completion of or termination from the Program, as set furth in the State Bar Court's Confidential Statement of Alternative Dispositions and Orders shall be impassed or resonanced to the Supreme Court.

10-10-1012		·
10 10 w		John Joseph Vandervoort
Date	Respondent's Gignature	Print Name
D/15/13	Elile H >	Vicki H. Young
Date	Respondent's Counsel Signature	Print Name
10/15/13	Jamm Millower	Tarumy M. Albertsen
Date	Deputy Trial Counsel's Signature	Print Name

Judge of the State Bar Court

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

[Rules Proc. of State Bar; Rule 5.27(B); Code Civ. Proc., § 1013a(4)]

I am a Case Administrator of the State Bar Court of California. I am over the age of eighteen and not a party to the within proceeding. Pursuant to standard court practice, in the City and County of San Francisco, on December 9, 2013, I deposited a true copy of the following document(s):

STIPULATION RE FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

By personally delivering a copy of said document(s) to:

TAMMY M. ALBERTSEN
180 HOWARD STREET, 6TH FLOOR
SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

VICKI H. YOUNG 180 HOWARD STREET, 6TH FLOOR SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94105

I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed in San Francisco, California, on December 9, 2013.

Mazie Yip
Case Administrator
State Bar Court

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

[Rules Proc. of State Bar; Rule 5.27(B); Code Civ. Proc., § 1013a(4)]

I am a Case Administrator of the State Bar Court of California. I am over the age of eighteen and not a party to the within proceeding. Pursuant to standard court practice, in the City and County of San Francisco, on June 14, 2016, I deposited a true copy of the following document(s):

DECISION AND DISCIPLINE ORDER; ORDER SEALING CERTAIN DOCUMENTS

STIPULATION RE FACTS AND CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

in a sealed envelope for collection and mailing on that date as follows:

by first-class mail, with postage thereon fully prepaid, through the United States Postal Service at San Francisco, California, addressed as follows:

JOHN JOSEPH VANDERVOORT JOHN JOSEPH VANDERVOORT 1339 ESPLANADE CHICO, CA 95926

by interoffice mail through a facility regularly maintained by the State Bar of California addressed as follows:

SUSAN CHAN, Enforcement, San Francisco TERRIE GOLDADE, Probation, Los Angeles

I hereby certify that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed in San Francisco, California, on June 14, 2016.

Mazie Yip

Case Administrator State Bar Court